Objections to construction of big dams for power generation

414. SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether his Ministry has received representations from organizations and State Government of Assam, protesting construction of big dams for power generation;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the details of measures and action taken by Government in this regard to calm the public sentiment and victims of the ill-effects of dams like flash floods, silt deposition in cultivable land, depletion of environment, etc. in the downstream and security of their life and propeity?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRI BHARATSINH SOLANKI) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The Ministry has received some representations from organizations and State Government of Assam protesting construction of big dam for power generation and relating to impact of hydel power development on downstream areas in Assam.

(c) To ally the apprehensions of the people with respect to downstream impacts in Assam of upstream Hydro Power Development in the region, NHPC Ltd, and North Eastern Electric Power Corporation (NEEPCO) have commissioned studies to assess the downstream impacts due to Subansiri Lower HE Project, Ranganadi Stage-I and Pare HE Projects. NHPC has awarded a comprehensive downstream impact study to University of Guwahati on 27.05.2008 which is being undertaken by University of Guwahati in association with University of Dibrugarh & Indian Institute of Technology (IIT). Guwahati. NEEPCO has also entrusted IIT, Guwahati for undenaking Detailed Hydrological Study of the Dikrong-Panyor river Basin and its impact in the downstream, which will cover Hydro-meteorological study of the Dikrong-Panyor Basin and its impact on flood scenario at the downstream of Ranganadi HE Project and on-going Pare HE Project with and without dam. Moreover, to forewarn the people in the downstream areas in case of approaching floods in the future, NEEPCO has entrusted the task of developing a model for flood forecasting in the downstream of its commissioned Ranganadi Hydro Electric Project (stage-I) and on-going Pare HEP, to North Eastern Space Applications Centre (NESAC), Umiam, Meghalaya.

Further, the Ministry of Environment & Forest while approving the Terms of Reference (TOR) for the construction of big dams, includes the assessrnent of downstream impacts in the TOR for preparation of Environmental Impact Assessrnent report.

Shortfall in power generation

415. SHRI N. BALAGANGA: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware of the fact that the thermal power generation of our country would come down due to the decrease in the import of coal; and